



United States Department of Agriculture
Rural Development
State Office-Lincoln, Nebraska

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May 7, 2007

Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

RE: WC Docket No. 02-60 (Rural Health Care Mechanism Pilot Program)

Dear Office of the Secretary:

Away from the city and urban areas lie rural America; this is where the Rural Nebraska Healthcare Network (RNHN) exists. It takes great collaboration to work together with nine medical institutions to keep up with modern medical technology. It is the future of healthcare everywhere but especially in rural America.


The RNHN is applying for funding by the FCC's Pilot Program to support the growth of healthcare in rural areas. If successful in attaining funding by the FCC the RNHN can continue to grow in collaboration for the healthcare needs of the Panhandle.

Distance in rural areas is one of the largest obstacles faced by the people that live in the Panhandle, it takes an hour or longer to reach a hospital and seek medical attention in many areas of the Panhandle. With the modern technology that this funding could provide the collaborative RNHN hospitals can build a strong solid network to continue to reach out to the residents of the Panhandle and treat their medical needs. Telehealth, x-rays via the internet and cameras in Emergency Rooms can save lives when travel times are an issue.

With this Pilot Program you are looking for someone to set an excellent example of what the funding through your program can do and the most it can do for the money you allow to each recipient. The RNHN has a proven track record in supplying outstanding means of collaboration to reach new heights in the latest technology to serve patients and have continued survival of rural hospitals.

The RNHN is the collaborative force you could count on to develop a very strong program with fiber connectivity. They are up to the task and will continue to be leaders among hospitals in providing excellent care, new technology and prosperity for their hospitals and communities.

Sincerely,


Sco. Blehm

USDA Rural Development

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List ABCDE

Cc: Honorable Kevin J. Martin
Honorable Michael J. Copps
Honorable Jonathan S. Adelstein
Honorable Deborah Taylor Tate
Honorable Robert M. McDowell
Jeremy Marcus, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau
Thomas Buckley, Telecommunications Access Policy Division, Wireline Competition Bureau

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